

Carlisle Housing Authority

Meeting Minutes

February 11, 2015

Present: Alan Lehotsky, Chair; Carolyn Ing; Mark Levitan; Elizabeth DeMille Barnett, Housing Coordinator. **Absent:** Steven Pearlman; W. Randall Brown

Guest: Alex Brewster, *Carlisle Mosquito*

1. Meeting called to order at 7:34 p.m.

2. Community Input (none)

3. Old Business

A. NOAH Benfield Farms

- i. **Development update.** Manufacturer's heating equipment issues arose recently when heat pumps iced up and failed. NOAH's management company, Peabody Properties, responded quickly and purchased space heaters and arranged for repair of the heat pumps.
- ii. **NOAH property tax abatement request.** The board reviewed a letter from Philip R. Giffie, Executive Director, Benfield Farms Limited Partnership, to the Carlisle Board of Assessors, requesting a two-part property tax abatement.

The first part of the abatement request calls for use of the income-based "Tax Factoring Method" for determination of property tax for the duration of the 99-year ground lease agreement with the Town. This calculation method takes into consideration the federal and state affordability restrictions that limit rental income and thus property/building value. Based upon information provided by Elizabeth D. Barnett, Housing Coordinator, on similar affordable ground lease projects in neighboring communities, NOAH's request for real estate tax relief is in keeping with common practice for affordable housing projects in Massachusetts. In contrast, the Carlisle Elderly Housing Association-owned Village Court senior development pays no real estate taxes. According to the NOAH request, the Carlisle Board of Assessors used a market cap rate of 5%, which is more appropriate for a market-rate rental development.

The second part of the NOAH tax abatement request is for \$22,000 in tax relief which would be used to fund a part-time Resident Services Coordinator to provide services and activities for residents, some of which will be made available to other seniors in Town. This request is consistent with the Housing Authority's commitment to support such a position which was included in the ground lease for the Benfield Farms senior housing development.

Mr. Lehotsky moved that the Carlisle Housing Authority supports the two-part tax abatement requests as detailed in Mr. Giffie's memorandum to the Board of Assessors of January 28, 2015; seconded by Ms. Ing. All present aye; the motion passed.

B. 338 Bedford Road group homes RFP

- i. **Request for Proposals.** Ms. Barnett reported that the Request for Proposals (RFP) deadline had been extended to January 30, due to the recent inclement weather. Mr.

Lehotsky reported that references are currently being checked so RFP evaluation can proceed.

- ii. **Financial analyst.** Mr. Lehotsky reminded members that \$2,000 had been budgeted for a professional financial analyst to evaluate financial aspects of proposals. Ms. Barnett was provided a recommendation and referral by the Massachusetts Housing Partnership for Charleen Regan. Ms. Regan is an experienced affordable housing financial analyst. Members were provided her Curriculum Vitae and a Letter of Interest, including her biographical information, for review. Prior to recommending Ms. Regan to the board, Ms. Barnett had also approached a second financial analyst, who provides work of the highest quality. He appreciated consideration, but felt that his present schedule did not allow him to take on additional consulting work at this time.

Mr. Lehotsky moved to allocate up to \$1,500 to engage Ms. Regan for this purpose; seconded by Ms. Ing. All present aye; the motion passed.

C. Inclusionary Zoning

Mr. Lehotsky reported that Inclusionary Zoning was discussed at the most recent meeting of the Affordable Housing Trust. Members were noncommittal at present, and were seeking reassurance that this bylaw revision would not have unanticipated negative outcomes.

Consensus of those present was that this remains a desirable zoning approach and the best present course of action was to work on it through the Housing Production Plan process.

D. Long Ridge Road Chapter 40B

Ms. Barnett and Mr. Lehotsky reported briefly on the status of the ZBA review of this project. There were no matters requiring the CHA's attention at this time.

4. New Business

A. Community Preservation Act FY 2016 Community Housing Fund Application

Mr. Lehotsky reported that the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) was meeting concurrently to discuss their FY 2016 CPA funding applications, in particular the Carlisle Affordable Housing Trust's request for \$50,000 from the Community Preservation Act (CPA) Community Housing funds. Per the CPA statute, these funds would be used to promote the development of affordable housing, specifically to identify and investigate the suitability of other properties for affordable housing and to secure options to purchase property for acquisition by the town. This funding would allow the Trust to procure consultants for: surveys, wetland studies and other investigations needed to determine whether property would be of value to the town as a site for community housing as well as to be able to respond quickly if a parcel of interest became available. Mr. Lehotsky stated that it would be beneficial if the Housing Authority voiced its support of this request.

Ms. Ing moved that the Carlisle Housing Authority supports the Carlisle Affordable Housing Trust's FY2016 application for \$50,000 of Community Preservation Affordable Housing funds; seconded by Mr. Levitan. All present aye; the motion was passed. Ms. Barnett immediately informed the CPC verbally of the results of this vote.

B. Update 2010 Town Of Carlisle Housing Production Plan

Mr. Lehotsky informed members that the Board of Selectman is seeking the names of two representatives of the Housing Authority to sit on the Housing Production Plan Committee. He stated that he would volunteer. The other members present did not immediately volunteer.

Mr. Lehotsky moved that the Housing Authority appoint Alan Lehotsky as CHA representative to the Housing Production Plan Committee; seconded by Mr. Levitan. All present aye; the motion passed.

C. Carlisle Housing Authority Opening

Mr. Lehotsky stated that one new board member is needed, with a goal of identifying a candidate by the time of the Town Caucus on March 9. If a candidate is found, they could be appointed to replace Mr. Brown prior to the Spring Town Election. Mr. Brown has indicated his willingness to resign if a candidate is found prior to the election.

D. Massachusetts Housing Partnership Rural Housing Summit

Ms. Barnett reported on the Massachusetts Housing Partnership Rural Housing Summit which took place in Worcester on December 18, 2014. The meeting featured the release and discussion of a White Paper with six policy recommendations aimed at helping rural communities with housing and economic challenges. One of these recommendations is of particular interest to the CHA: "Create a funding set-aside and a streamlined approval process for rental developments of less than 20 units that are too small to utilize Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits." It was emphasized that this is only at the recommendation stage at this time.

5. Authorizations

- A. Approved payment of advertisement cost for RFP notice in the Carlisle Mosquito.
- B. Approved reimbursement of registration fee for Ms. Barnett to attend Massachusetts Housing Partnership Rural Housing Summit.
- C. Approved reimbursement for purchase of local printer for Ms. Barnett's office.
- D. Ms. Barnett requested approval to spend \$75.00, half of the tuition required, for a course on Real Property, so she may fully complete her continuing education certification as a Massachusetts public procurement officer. Ms. Barnett would contribute the remaining amount personally. Ms. Barnett's certification as a public procurement officer for Design and Construction is in place until 2016.

Ms. Ing moved that the CHA authorize expenditure of \$75 for tuition for Ms. Barnett to renew her certification as a certified Massachusetts public procurement officer by taking a one-day course on Real Property; seconded by Mr. Levitan. All present aye; the motion was passed.

6. Approval of Minutes

- A. **March 24, 2014.** Ms. Barnett stated that a review of records revealed that minutes of the March 24, 2014 meeting had not been approved. A motion to accept the minutes as written

was made by Mr. Lehotsky, seconded by Ms. Ing. All eligible members present aye; the motion passed.

- B. December 8, 2014.** Minutes of the December 8, 2014 meeting were reviewed. A motion to accept the minutes as written was made by Ms. Ing, seconded by Mr. Lehotsky. All present aye; the motion passed.

7. Next Meeting Dates: Monday, February 23, 2015.

- 8. Meeting Adjourned** at 8:23 p.m. Motion by Ms. Ing; seconded by Mr. Levitan. All present aye; the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Levitan, Secretary